



New Hampshire Housing and Conservation Planning Program

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www.nh.gov/oep/programs/HCPP/

PROPOSED RULES PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, December 12, 2007

6:00 –7:00 PM

Office of Energy and Planning

57 Regional Drive, Concord, NH

MINUTES

PRESENT

Barbara Kravitz, Seabrook Planning Board
Bill Parker, Milford Community Development
Dick Robertson, Hillsboro CDC
Sister Marguerite Gravel, Hillsboro CDC
Bill Wheeler, Hillsboro CDC
Richard Minard, HCPP Advisory Board, appointed by NH Audubon
Bill Prokop, Town of Antrim
Kenneth Ortmann, HCPP Advisory Board, appointed by NH Municipal Association
Hearsh Van Luven Hillsboro CDC
Dean Christon, HCPP Advisory Board, appointed by NH Housing Finance Authority
Roger Hawk, Interested Citizen and Planning Consultant
Diane Chauncey, Town of Antrim
Benjamin Pratt, Town of Antrim
Bill Norton, HCPP Advisory Board, appointed by LCHIP
Cynthia Copeland, Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Janet Towse, Alexandria Conservation Commission

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Amy Ignatius, Director, NH Office of Energy and Planning
Jennifer Czysz, NH Office of Energy and Planning
Dari Sassan, NH Office of Energy and Planning

I. INTRODUCTION

Ms. Ignatius called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM on December 12, 2007 at the NH Office of Energy and Planning, 57 Regional Drive, Concord, NH. She described how the hearing fits into overall rulemaking process and the Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (JLCAR) procedures. Ms. Ignatius also thanked all those whose participation has contributed to the creation of the Housing and Conservation

Planning Program (HCPP) and current draft rules. She also thanked those who have contributed to the review of the draft rules including all meeting attendees.

II. HCPP OVERVIEW

Ms. Czysz presented an overview of the HCPP including an explanation of the overarching goal of bringing inclusionary housing, land conservation, and historic preservation into one integrated planning process and development strategy. Ms. Czysz introduced the four HCPP grant stages as well as the ten guiding principles of the program. She reviewed the proposed match requirement and maximum grant amounts at each stage, grant application information and criteria, and the application scoring methodology. Ms. Czysz also discussed the proposed timeframe for the first round of grants.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

A question was posed about the local match amounts. It was clarified by Mr. Ortmann that for a grant of \$15,000 requiring a 50 percent local match, the participant would have to contribute \$15,000, not \$7,500. Thus, for participants to receive full funding for each stage, they would have to raise funds as follows:

Stage	minimum local match required to leverage grant maximum
1	\$1,053
2	\$15,000
3	\$20,000
4	\$10,000

Ms. Czysz indicated that though there is a grant maximum, there is no limit to the funds that a town may raise for use in the program.

Questions were posed regarding preliminary work that a potential participant may have already done. Ms. Czysz indicated that while work that has already been completed will certainly be eligible to fulfill pertinent criteria, all requirements of a stage must be completed before funding for a subsequent stage will be granted. It was indicated that some potential participants might have previously fulfilled not only a portion of Stage 1 requirements but also requirements of a subsequent stage. The question was asked whether such an applicant could apply for funding to complete the work of more than one Stage at once. Ms. Czysz answered that the enabling statute of HCPP states that until an applicant has fulfilled all requirements of previous stages, they will not be eligible for funding for a subsequent stage. It was noted that from a cost effectiveness standpoint, it might be advantageous to be able fund the completion of multiple, partially-complete stages simultaneously.

A question was posed about the potential eligibility of volunteer services to be counted toward match requirements. Ms. Czysz indicated that others have voiced this same comment and that it will be further considered.

A question was posed about whether OEP would place any requirements on the selection or authorization of consultants. Ms. Czysz answered that OEP would not regulate a participant's selection of consultants. Mr. Ortmann added that participants must follow their own municipal guidelines for contract selection.

A question was posed regarding potential disagreement between OEP and the municipality about the fulfillment of Stage requirements. Ms. Czysz indicated that opportunity would be provided for discussion of such discrepancies. Mr. Ortmann added that OEP would have the authority to make final judgment on what qualifies for fulfillment of requirements.

Comments and questions were made regarding the potential of the scoring criteria to favor one type of community over another. Ms. Czysz and Mr. Ortmann replied that within the many scoring criteria there are areas where each type of community will have the opportunity to score high.

A question was posed regarding the likelihood of a large community to score higher than a smaller community because the larger community has perhaps had more planning activity. Ms. Czysz replied that the score an applicant receives will depend primarily on the adherence to program principles and demonstrated commitment to an open, all-inclusive process. Within these parameters, there is no reason a larger community is better suited than a smaller one.

A comment was made that the application scoring criteria which rewards points for less access to existing municipal planning personnel may be misguided because communities that do have a planning staff do not necessarily have the ability to allocate staff time toward conservation and housing planning.

A representative for the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions made the following comments/questions:

1. Pertaining to administrative rules item Pln 1005.03 (a) (2), it was requested that "...by OEP." be changed to "...by OEP, state, regional, and local planning agencies."
2. Would a municipality's technical update to its master plan qualify under HCPP?

Ms. Czysz replied that a technical update of the master plans data would not likely qualify unless such an update included broader policy statements and greater implementation of the growth and development strategy into the master plan.

3. Existing standards for data generation (e.g. GRANIT standards) may be applicable to Stage 1 requirements.
4. Is there a correlation between HCPP and The Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP)?

Ms. Czysz replied that though there is no direct relation between HCPP and CTAP, CTAP funds could be used as a match for HCPP leverage.

5. A request was made that the timing of application deadlines considers town warrant article submission scheduling.

Ms. Czysz responded that preliminary scheduling has considered town meeting and municipal timelines will continue to be accommodated when possible.

A request was made pertaining to administrative rules item Pln 1007.02 (c) that "...housing needs for families.." be changed to "...housing needs for households.".

A question was posed asking if any party had conducted a role-playing exercise to test the scoring criteria in the proposed rules. Ms. Czysz replied that no such exercise had taken place, however many hours of discussion went into establishing a scoring system that adheres to the enabling statutes and maintains equity.

Discussion was initiated regarding the potential of HCPP to fund the creation of "safe houses" for individuals released from prison as a means of curbing repeat offense rates and creating safer communities.

Mr. Dean responded that while HCPP certainly funds research and planning that addresses the housing needs of the entire community including individuals released from prison, HCPP would not fund the development of a specific structure such as a safe house.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Czysz, Senior Planner
Office of Energy and Planning

JC:das